



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of Policy: September 2025

Date of next review: September 2026

Who the review will involve: Headteacher, Senior Leadership team

Senior member of staff responsible for overseeing that this policy is implemented and regularly reviewed: Mike Clancy (Assistant Headteacher)

## DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION

This policy was formulated by a working party consisting of the Senior Leadership Team Staff and Pastoral Team. The policy has been designed using guidance from the following legislation that set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of The [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of The [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance 2024](#)
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## INTRODUCTION

The Avon Valley School and Performing Arts College is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all of our students. We expect all of our students to attend school every day when the school is in session.

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. We, therefore, strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all of our students. Attendance is a critical factor to a successful school career and we actively celebrate and encourage students to achieve the highest person attendance possible, with the aspiration, that students achieve 100% attendance to school where possible.

We recognise that parents play a pivotal role in ensuring their child's attendance and we actively strive to ensure strong and positive home-school links. Should any problems arise which may affect a student's regular attendance, we will work in partnership with parents, students and, where necessary, the Local Authority, to identify and resolve these problems as quickly as possible. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our aims and objectives in relation to our students' attendance are to:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils.
- Promote the importance of good attendance for pupils' own personal progression and achievement.
- Maintain a consistent whole school approach to attendance
- Record and monitor attendance and review this regularly to minimise and improve absenteeism (persistent and severe) and unauthorised absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Maintain and promote positive links between school and home, providing support where needed in a timely manner.
- Discourage families from arranging holidays during school terms
- Ensure that parents are aware of when it is appropriate for their child to be absent from school and to understand the possible consequences of failing to ensure their child's regular attendance.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## OUR PRINCIPLES

We recognise the importance that all of our students and parents feel supported. We will therefore:

- Encourage parents to actively promote their child's full time attendance
- Provide information to students and parents relating to attendance
- Ensure all staff are aware of registration requirements relating to attendance and the Law.
- Work with external agencies to support students and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.
- Ensure all staff have access to regular safeguarding training
- Consult with school staff members, school Governors and Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) in maintaining our Attendance Policy and to improve our practice.
- Ensure that school staff and parents are familiar with and adhere to our procedures for registering students' attendance, and reporting, recording and following up a student's absence or lateness.

## STATUTORY DUTY

Under Section 7 of the Education act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a full time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered.

If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at school fails to attend regularly then the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

The school is responsible for recording a student's attendance twice a day; at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session. This entry must be made for all students of compulsory

school age who are on the admission roll, including those on alternative curriculum courses through the C.L.M. system.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Governing board**

The Governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the attendance officer to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

### **The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'Senior Attendance Champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mike Clancy (Assistant Headteacher) and can be contacted via:

Telephone: 01788542355 or email: [mclancy@avonvalleyschool.uk](mailto:mclancy@avonvalleyschool.uk)

### **The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher/Senior Attendance Champion (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Miss McSweeney and can be contacted via:

Telephone: 01788 542355 or email [amcsweeney@avonvalleyschool.uk](mailto:amcsweeney@avonvalleyschool.uk)

### **Class teacher/Form tutor**

Class teacher/Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office. Morning registration is 8:45 – 9:15, students arriving after this time will be marked late. Students marked after 9:15 will receive a 'U' code for the morning registration which counts against their attendance. Pm marks are taken at 12:35 daily.

### **School admin/office staff**

School admin/office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Head of year/student welfare leader where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### **Parents**

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day/timetabled session on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:45am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority to improve their child's attendance
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting either the Senior Attendance Lead (Mike Clancy) or the students Welfare leader/Head of year.

## **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time
- Attend every timetabled session, on time

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

These procedures are to ensure and promote a whole school awareness of attendance:

### **Lateness:**

- Registers open at 8.45am and close at 9.15am. Registration is not only a legal requirement but is an important point of a child's day where information is often given out to all students. Lateness can also cause disruption to a class and embarrassment for the child arriving after the registration has started
- Any child who arrives after 8.45am but before 9:15am will be recorded as late
- Any student arriving after 9:15am will receive an unauthorised absence 'U' mark which will impact on their overall attendance, unless a medical note is provided
- Records of persistent late attenders will be kept and discussed with parents for further intervention if felt necessary, daily break time late detentions are held, with escalations to after school detentions for lateness if required.

### **Absences:**

- First day contact of absence and notes to be provided on child's return
- Absence should be reported through Class Charts, email or telephone.
- Weekly/fortnightly reviews of attendance by the Pastoral Team in time-tabled meetings.
- All students with below 95% attendance will be closely monitored and contact made with parents where necessary, to offer support from the Pastoral Team.
- Students who have three consecutive days' absence or more due to illness, parents maybe requested to provide medical evidence to the school.

### **Children Missing Education:**

Where a student has **10 consecutive days of unexplained absence ('N' Codes)** and '**all reasonable steps**' have been taken by the school to establish their whereabouts without success, the school should make an immediate referral to Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS).

**Reasonable steps** include:

- a. telephone calls to all known contacts
- b. letters home
- c. contact with other schools where siblings may be registered

- d. possible home visits where safe to do so
- e. enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- f. enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the child/family
- g. all contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the student's file

### Definition of Authorised Absence:

- An absence is classified as authorised when the child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer of that child. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Exceptional cases of religious observances or particular family circumstances may also result in an authorised absence being granted by the school
- Only the Headteacher of the school can make an absence authorised. **Parents and carers do not have this authority.** Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be recorded as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, or allows a child to stay out of school to celebrate a family birthday or go on a family outing, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

### Definition of Unauthorised Absence:

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and the parent
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent
- Persistent lateness can constitute unauthorised absence
- If a student's attendance falls to an unacceptable level; absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless medical evidence can be provided to the school. Medical evidence can be in the form of appointment cards, doctors' letters, copies of prescriptions, etc.

## REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The headteacher can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. The headteacher will restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstance set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances\*

The headteacher can also allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities or to attend other schools or settings.

\*The law states that a leave of absence may only be granted by a school if an application is made in advance and if the school considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Permission may only be given by a person authorised by the school's proprietor to do so. Each application must be judged individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant background context behind each request.

In general, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation does not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil may be absent.

The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.

Parents making an application for Leave of Absence are advised to provide sufficient information and notice to allow the Headteacher to consider all exceptional circumstances and notify the parents of their decision. The school may request further information or supporting documentation where appropriate.

If parents have not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to confirm whether the leave is authorised prior to the start of the absence.

Where applications for Leave of Absence are made in advance and refused, the child is expected to attend school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, the absence will be recorded as an "unauthorised". If additional days are taken either before or after the requested period, they may also be considered as part of the leave of absence.

Applications for Leave of Absence that are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation, and any such absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.

Absence requests should be returned to school via reception or by email at

[loarequests@avonvalleyschool.uk](mailto:loarequests@avonvalleyschool.uk)

[Link to attendance web page and Leave of absence form](#)

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council. Penalty notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices and in the first instance, as an alternative to prosecution proceedings.

When absence is granted by the head teacher, the parent will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in a possible children missing from education procedure being instigated.

## PENALTY NOTICES

Penalty notices will be issued by the Local Authority on request of the Head teacher to parents or carers if your child(ren) are absent from school. Penalty notices will be issued in line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices. Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct [WCC PN code of conduct](#).

The national threshold set out in the statutory guidance states that a penalty notice must be considered for 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10-week period may span different terms or school years.

The school will prioritise a 'support first' approach offering support to families in cases where it is appropriate. Penalty notices can still be issued where support is not appropriate, such as leave of absence in term time or when support has not been engaged with.

If the Local Authority believes a penalty notice would be appropriate in an individual case, the Authority shall retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met. An example of this is where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absences for birthdays or other family events.

Penalty Notices will be issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

- First penalty notice: The amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.
- Second penalty notice within a 3-year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.

A national limit of 2 penalty notices that can be issued to a parent of the same child within a rolling 3-year period has been set within the National Framework, so at the 3<sup>rd</sup> (or subsequent) offence(s) a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996 or alternative action may be considered including other legal interventions.

## MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE

We recognise the importance of good practice by:

- keeping and maintaining accurate attendance records. These will remain on file for a minimum of 3 years.
- recognising the links between attendance and achievement.
- rewarding students for outstanding or improved attendance on a regular basis.
- working closely with Warwickshire Attendance Service.
- ensuring all appropriate staff have had training and guidance related to the accurate completion of registers and attendance information.
- providing parents with information related to attendance in school documentation, e.g. school website, newsletters, prospectus, etc.

- regularly analysing attendance information and ensuring follow up action in the case of non-school attendance.
- reviewing the attendance policy with our Governing Body every two years or sooner, if necessary, with our Governing Body.

### **Levels of monitoring and stages of intervention:**

The school uses 'Attend' to monitor and communicate messaging to parents. The system alerts parents to key milestones of absence, alongside sending positive messaging when targets have been met. The messaging trigger points are outlined below:

Stage 1 – 5 days missed (10 sessions missed)

Stage 2 – 8 days missed (16 sessions missed)

Stage 3 – 12 days missed (24 sessions missed)

Stage 4 – 15 days missed (30 sessions missed)

Stage 5 – 17.5 days missed (35 sessions missed)

Stage 6 – 19 days (38 sessions missed)

Stage 7 – Severely absent 95 days missed (190 sessions missed)

Students who have triggered stage 6 will continue receive targeted attendance targets and positive messaging of encouragement.

### **Severe absence below 50%**

Pupils classed as having a severe absence are to be invited in with a bespoke plan and targets to be agreed with the pupil, parents and support from the local LA, where appropriate, to achieve a more frequent attendance.

## **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed annually.

## **Appendix 1: attendance codes**

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school

<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>J1</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school

<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence

<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays